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Remarks

Entry of the above-noted amendments, reconsideration of the application, and allowance of all claims pending are respectfully requested. By this amendment, claims 1-4, 6-11, 13-19, 21-24, and 26-32 are amended and claims 33-40 have been added. These amendments to the claims constitute a bona fide attempt by applicants to advance prosecution of the application and obtain allowance of certain claims, and are in no way meant to acquiesce to the substance of the rejections. The specification has been amended to correct a typographical error. Support for the amendments can be found throughout the specification (e.g., page 6, line 10, to page 8, line 3), drawings (e.g., FIGS. 1-2), and claims and thus, no new matter has been added. Claims 1-4 and 6-40 are pending.

Interview on January 12, 2005:

The amendments herein follow a telephone conference between the Examiner and Robert J. Brill and Carmen B. Patti, applicants' attorneys, and Joseph S. Hanasz, applicants' agent, on January 12, 2005 in which features of Cordova et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,546,482; "Cordova"), Rosenmayer et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,675,686; "Rosenmayer"), and claims 1-2 and 14 were discussed. During the telephone conference, positive discussion was had and agreement was reached that:

a.   an amendment to the claims that indicates the voids are introduced over what naturally occurs in the polymeric potting material would patentably distinguish the claims over the art of record, including Cordova and Rosenmayer; and

b.   the Examiner plans to perform additional searching and should the Examiner locate other prior art considered relevant to the claims the

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Examiner will telephone applicants' attorney to discuss an additional amendment if needed to render the claims allowable.

The time and courtesy afforded applicants' attorneys and agent as well as the positive discussion and above listed agreements reached, are gratefully acknowledged by applicants.

Claim Objections:

Claim 26 is objected to because of the following informalities: "There is a missing word 'of' in line 4, just before the second word 'layers'." Claim 26 has been amended to include the missing word.

Withdrawal of the objection to claim 26 is therefore respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103:

Claims 1-4 and 6-32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Cordova et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,546,482; "Cordova") in view of Rosenmayer et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,675,686; "Rosenmayer"). This rejection is respectfully, but most strenuously, traversed.

Applicants have amended independent claim 1 to recite "a polymeric potting material that encapsulates a fiber optic sensing coil, wherein the polymeric potting material comprises a plurality of introduced voids that promote an increase in compressibility of the polymeric potting material". As discussed in the Interview on January 12, 2005, an amendment to the claims that indicates the voids are introduced over what naturally occurs in the polymeric potting material would patentably distinguish the claims over the art of record, including Cordova and Rosenmayer.
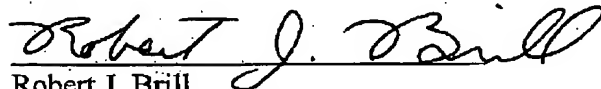
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For all the above reasons presented above with reference to claim 1, independent claims 1, 15, 17, and 31 presented herewith are believed neither anticipated nor obvious over the art of the record. The dependent claims 2-4, 6-14, 16, 18-30, and 32-40 are believed allowable for the same reasons as the independent claims 1, 15, 17, and 31, as well as for their own additional characterizations.

Withdrawal of the § 103 rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, allowance of all claims pending is respectfully requested. If an additional telephone conference would be of assistance in advancing the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to call applicants' attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert J. Brill
Attorney for Applicants
Reg. No. 36,760

Dated: January 20, 2005

PATTI & BRILL, LLC
Customer Number 32205